

but were marched right on, and after passing through the town we took the road that bore towards York river. That night when the camp-followers and stragglers came into camp they told us that our army had been surprised at Williamsburg and that many men were killed. That surprise ought not to have taken place. Some one was negligent.

On the next day we still continued in our march to lean over towards York river.

Gen. Franklin, with a large force, was going up the river on transports, escorted by gun-boats; and we were to prevent him from getting between Gen. Johnson and Richmond or interfering with the retreat.

We had quite a battle near Barhamsville or Eltham's Landing. The enemy afterwards claimed it a success. We thought we succeeded. We did not drive his fleet down the river, he had too many gun-boats, but we prevented his coming off the river to impede the movements of our army.

The army was now well on its way on the retreat from the Yorktown peninsula. The ordnance stores and other supplies that had been abandoned must have been immense. Some of it was brought down to the lines near Yorktown within a day or two before the retreat began. Was that good management? Was it a necessary loss?

The march back towards Richmond was very disagreeable. There had been a great deal of rain; the roads were very bad, muddy and miry. We got separated from our commissary wagons. The men suffered with hunger.

One evening when the regiment was filed out of the road to camp—they had been without rations and none were in sight—a wagon came along loaded with corn in the ear. It was intended for the horses, but the men were so hungry that, upon the suggestion by some one that parched corn would do for subsistence, they rushed for the wagon and would have emptied it but for the interference of the guard, who told them that the commissary wagon was coming.

When the army got within the lines that were finally

chosen for the defense of Richmond our camp was north of the city.

On the 29th and 30th of May we had heavy rains. A fearful thunder storm passed over our camp. One stroke of lightning in our brigade disabled for a time about thirty men, of whom it was said that four died. The description of that storm as given in the Richmond Examiner the next morning was most graphic. It was remarkable as a literary production.

In consequence of these heavy rains the Chickahominy river was much swollen, and Gen. Johnson, who had withdrawn most of his army to the south side of that stream, thought it a good time to attack McClellan, whose army was on both sides of the river. On the 31st of May we were hurried out in the direction of Seven Pines and joined in the attack.

For a while we drove the enemy in fine style. They must have been completely surprised, for we passed through camps in which we found their dinner in the kettles being cooked, and in some cases it was smoking-hot on their camp-tables. After driving them back for a considerable distance they began to make a stand, and the fighting became furious. As we afterwards learned, we were not far from Fair Oaks Station and nearly opposite "The Grape Vine Bridge," which was a new bridge constructed by them.

Reinforcements from the north side were pouring across this bridge and our advance was stayed. Gen. Johnson, together with President Davis and Gen. G. W. Smith, with a numerous staff, came up in the rear of our brigade. Here it was that Gen. Johnson was wounded. That was nearly night, and as it was a dark evening the heavy battle-smoke soon made it impossible to see, and the firing ceased and we made no further advance. The next morning, Sunday, June 1st, found the two armies still in front of each other. But no heavy fighting was done on our part of the line. They did considerable shelling from the north side of the Chickahominy. So ended the battle of Seven Pines and Fair Oaks.